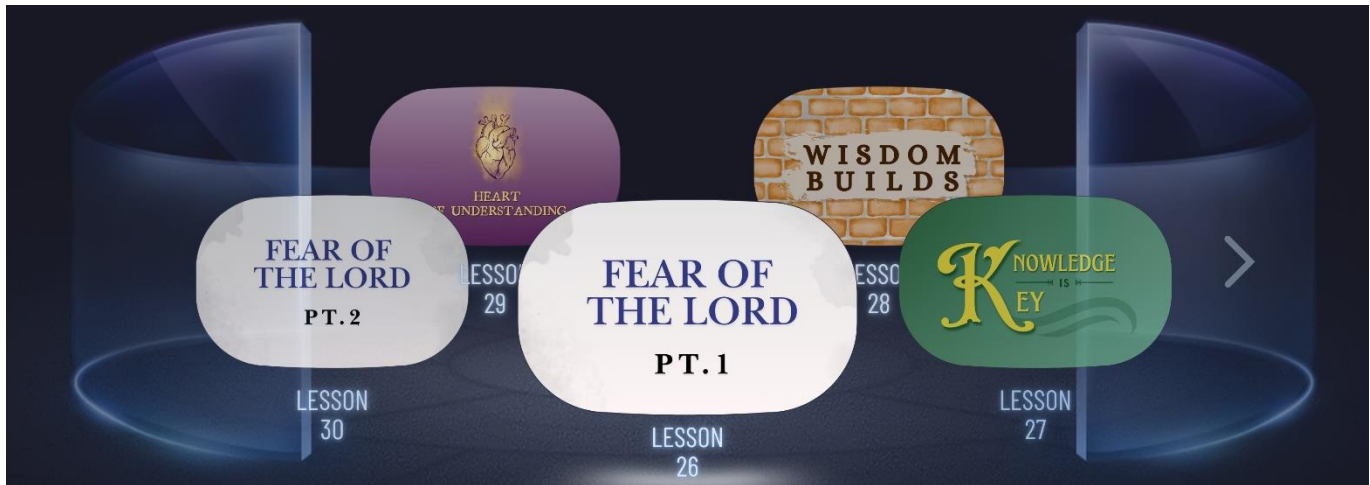


## FEAR OF THE LORD PT. 1



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#### Scriptures Cited:

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## KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, UNDERSTANDING

### Proverbs 9:10

<sup>10</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

For this lesson, we are starting here because in this one verse which tells us about the Fear of the Lord, we see three other principles named:

- Knowledge
- Wisdom
- Understanding

And though the title of this lesson is “The Fear of the Lord” we will be introducing a foundation around these other three principles by studying what the Bible has to say concerning each. In doing this, we will gain a better understanding of these principles and ultimately conclude this set of lessons by focusing on the Fear of the Lord specifically.

As we read here in verse 10: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding”. And what I want us to note from this verse is the importance of the fear of the Lord - it is the *beginning* of wisdom. In other words it is where wisdom starts. We also see here that the knowledge of the holy (of Who and what is holy) ...is understanding.

The book of Proverbs as a whole is commonly known as the book of wisdom. But as we continue we will see many places where all three (knowledge, wisdom, and understanding) are mentioned together. If we go to the beginning of the book, we will see that ***the fear of the Lord*** is not only the *beginning of wisdom* - it is also the *beginning of knowledge*. Starting in verse one of chapter one, we read:

### **Proverbs 1:1-7**

*<sup>1</sup> The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;*

*<sup>2</sup> To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; <sup>3</sup> To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; <sup>4</sup> To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.*

*<sup>5</sup> A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: <sup>6</sup> To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.*

*<sup>7</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

This passage of scripture truly speaks for itself. In this introduction we can see the focus and direction of the entire book. The importance and value of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding are emphasized right from the beginning.

But if we think about it - what exactly is wisdom? What is knowledge? What is understanding? When we go to the dictionary or Google to try to define these terms, it is interesting that these words are used somewhat synonymously in our common language. This can make it difficult to pin down their true meanings. For example, when you look up the definition of knowledge, it says ‘practical understanding’ or if you look up wisdom, it’ll say ‘the ability to use knowledge’ or ‘the quality of being wise’.

But we can begin to gain some clarity on the meanings of these terms if we pay close attention to the way verse 2 is written. It says “To know wisdom and instruction...” And if you really think about that – if we are **to know wisdom**, is it actually wisdom or is it then knowledge? It can be easy to confuse wisdom for knowledge. But this verse lets us know that wisdom is something that can be known. Later in this lesson I will share what I have personally learned about the meanings of these three things and hopefully it will be as beneficial to you in your walk with the Lord as it has been in mine.

Looking back at this set of scriptures, the next thing to note is in verse 5 where it reads “A wise man will hear...” We will see that one of the first and main components of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding, is that you have to hear. In order to gain the knowledge (the information) you have to hear it first. As it says “A wise man will hear, and will increase learning...”

Then in verse 6 we see “To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.” It is interesting to note a few things here:

- In this verse the word ‘proverb’ in the original Hebrew is מָשָׁל - māšāl, which is also translated as ‘parable’ in many other verses throughout the Old Testament.
- This verse in the Septuagint (Greek version of the Old Testament) uses the word παραβολήν - parabolē, which is the same Greek word used in the New Testament for most of the parables that Jesus spoke.

From this, we can see that when it comes to 'proverbs/parables/dark sayings' in the Bible, we must **understand** them in order to benefit from the *knowledge*, and *wisdom* contained in the teachings.

Lastly, we see something interesting in verse 7, that "fools despise wisdom and instruction". This verse may provide some insight on the overall condition of our society. Many today do not have the fear of the Lord. And as a result, we see people living their lives foolishly with no true wisdom... they have no true knowledge, and they have no true understanding.

We will now continue by going to chapter 2 in the book of Proverbs. Keep in mind how the three things (knowledge, wisdom, and understanding) are mentioned here and how they all relate to each other. Proverbs chapter 2 and verses 1 through 11 read:

### Proverbs 2:1-11

<sup>1</sup> My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; <sup>2</sup> So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; <sup>3</sup> Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; <sup>4</sup> If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;

<sup>5</sup> Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

<sup>6</sup> For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

<sup>7</sup> He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. <sup>8</sup> He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. <sup>9</sup> Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

<sup>10</sup> When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; <sup>11</sup> Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

There really is a lot packed into those eleven verses, showing the importance of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. We are told to desire and seek after them because of their ability to keep and preserve us. We also see that all three come directly from the Lord. Verse 6 says “For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” This is another example of God’s goodness and grace because wisdom, knowledge, and understanding are things given to us by God if we will receive the words that have come ‘out of His mouth’.

We also can see the importance of knowledge highlighted in well-known verses like Hosea chapter 4 verse 6 where it says “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...” letting us know the danger of lacking knowledge. We learn here that without knowledge - without the information, the result will be that the people will perish. And this was spoken by God of His own people... “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

Another scripture that highlights the importance and value of wisdom and understanding, is found in Proverbs chapter 4 verses 5 through 7 where we read:

#### **Proverbs 4:5-7**

*<sup>5</sup> Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.<sup>6</sup> Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.*

**Note:** And then the importance of wisdom here, it says...

*<sup>7</sup> Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.*

Here we have clear instructions to get wisdom and not forsake it. Again, we see that wisdom will “preserve” and “keep” you. We often pray and desire for God's protection, but here we see that wisdom (which is from God) has the ability to keep and protect us and is actually one of the means that God gives for our protection. Verse 7 tells us that “wisdom is the principal thing” so we really cannot afford to underestimate the importance of it. We also see here that in all of our getting of wisdom we are to also get understanding.

One last way that we will highlight the importance of all of these principles is by looking at how they relate to Jesus. If we go to the book of Isaiah chapter 11 there is a prophecy given which tells us about Jesus. Beginning in verse 1 it reads:

#### **Isaiah 11:1-2**

*<sup>1</sup> And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: <sup>2</sup> And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD:*

So along with what we see here, hopefully we all know that the Spirit came to rest on Jesus after His baptism. In the book of John it says the Heavens opened up and the Spirit of God descended on Him like a dove. And here in Isaiah we have a little more information of what that Spirit consists of... we see all three of those principles listed here. We see the Spirit of wisdom, and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might... we also see the spirit of knowledge, and then what we started off with: "*and of the fear of the Lord*". So, even Jesus had and lived His life in the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.

## PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Throughout my own life, when trying to understand these principles myself, I knew that *knowledge* is basically information. You need the information, the facts. And I thought what always came next was *understanding* – that you had to understand the facts or the knowledge, before you could apply it as wisdom. But what I've now come to learn is that when walking with the Lord by faith, the order is actually: knowledge, wisdom, and then understanding... in that order.

Yes, knowledge is 'information'. You need to hear the information, you need to know the facts, the truth. When it comes to wisdom... once you know the truth, once you know what is right and wrong... **wisdom is simply doing what you know is right.** That is wisdom. That is why you can have 'knowledge of wisdom' (or as the scripture said "to know wisdom"). Wisdom is actually to do the right thing - to do what you know is right. That is wisdom. And then **true understanding comes from wisdom.** Understanding comes as you do the right thing. As you see the good consequences of applying wisdom, you will come to understand more fully why what is right, is right.

The best example that I can give is from a time when my own life fell apart and was broken in pieces. The harsh reality of my situation caused me to really assess where I was at and how I had gotten there. It caused me to humbly and truly come to the Lord. I honestly had to admit "Obviously, I don't know - just look at my life. Lord, I need You to show me, I need You to tell me."

And He did. He gave me the information. Like it says in Acts chapter 2, 'He has made known to me the paths of life'. And I am really so thankful that when I came to the Lord humbly, He truly showed me and gave me the knowledge of the truth. And in that, what I came to know was that I didn't have what I thought I had. He showed me that I had not been saved the way that the people in the Bible were saved. I had not yet obeyed the gospel in the same **One Way** that the people in the Bible did. Once I got this information, **I made the choice to apply wisdom** and acted on what I now knew was the right thing to do.

When looking back to my life before that point, I have often explained it by using an analogy of receiving a brand new bicycle that is still in the box and you have to put together yourself - that was my life. In my haste I thought "I know what a bicycle is *supposed* to look like; let me just put this together and I'll be riding it in no time." But after everything fell apart I realized, "Wait, the handlebars are not in the right place and I had put the seat on backwards." That's when I had to be honest with myself and realized "I really don't know how to put this thing together, **maybe I should read the instruction book.**"

This is when I truly began seeking the instruction of the Lord through His word, and I made up my mind to just do things His way. And though I came seeking to understand His word **I approached it with humility and with the intent to let His word *BE* my understanding.** After years of taking the knowledge of His word and applying the wisdom of just doing what I now know is right, so much understanding has come as I have tried my best to walk humbly with my Lord. When I see and have seen souls coming to Christ, and even mended relationships in my own life, by just being obedient to the Lord... the understanding has come.

## DOING THE RIGHT THING

As we read in the scriptures above, these three principles will produce good outcomes for anyone who is willing to apply them in their life. To know the way of salvation we must hear and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is why hearing is so important – you have to hear the Word.

Once you have received the knowledge of salvation and of the *true way* to be saved, apply wisdom to that knowledge and simply do what you now know is right. We see examples of those being saved doing just that in the book of Acts. After hearing the word and believing it, they then applied wisdom to their knowledge by following the **instruction** to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin.

After being obedient to the word of the Lord (which is wisdom), we are to continue in the knowledge of what the Lord would have us to do, just as those we read about in the Bible. And as we walk this path we will gain more and more understanding of why this is what is right.

Many times with the Lord we won't have full understanding in the beginning – that is where faith comes in. If He tells you the right thing to do, step out on that instruction. That is faith, and it is also wisdom. And in applying wisdom and doing it, you will gain more understanding as you continue walking this path. As we read in Proverbs 1:7 *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”*

If you are someone who has the knowledge of salvation... apply wisdom to that. Do what you know is right and let the understanding come. Hopefully by sharing a bit of my personal testimony and looking at these few verses we have a good starting point as we continue studying what the word has to say about these principles.

Feel free to [contact us](#) as we all continue to grow in knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and the fear of the Lord.

### Revelation 12:11

*<sup>11</sup> And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*